

The Broads Society

Minutes of the Northern Rivers Sub-Committee Meeting held on 8 December 2014 at 7.30 pm at the Hotel Wroxham

Present: Paul Savage (Chairman), Keith Bacon, Lesley Bonshor,
Michael Brandon-Jones, Peter Cobb, David Edleston and John Pitchers

In attendance: Carol Palfrey (Administrator/Committee Secretary)

1 Apologies

David Skinner and John Scott

2 Minutes of the meeting of 13 October 2014.

The minutes had been circulated and were agreed and signed by the Chair as a true record.

3 Matters Arising

3.1 Cess Staithe (Minute 3.1)

Keith Bacon gave an update on the proposal by Martham Boatyard to apply for a diversion of the footpath. The footpath in current use was not, in fact, the path registered as an official right of way; this would need to be rectified. The proposed diversion would disconnect the footpath from Cess Road leading to problems for the owners of bungalows and those who normally used the road to access the riverside path. The local Tenants Association and the Property Management Company would be applying for an easement to allow right of access.

Keith recommended that the Society should make representations objecting to the proposals and advised the Administrator to contact Marcia Lee, the Rights of Way Officer at County Hall, requesting that the Society be added to the list of consultees.

3.2 BA Mooring and Access Strategy (Minute 3.3)

Paul Savage gave a brief explanation of the BA's financial problems relating to moorings. Every financial year starting in 2005/2006 the Broads Authority had received a qualified report from the Auditor because no provision had been made for the depreciation of fixed assets, which include moorings. The situation had been rectified for 2014/15. As a result, 5 years' worth of maintenance needs to be carried out in one year leaving the Authority with a major funding gap. The proposed solution was to identify those moorings deemed "essential" and those which could be abandoned. (See Minutes of previous meeting for details of the BA Workshop organised to consider a list.)

It appeared that the Broads Authority had reviewed the list of leases and decided not to renew those due to expire. It was anticipated four or five of the current leases were in this category.

There was a lengthy discussion during which members suggested that a more sensible approach would to carry out a survey and identify moorings in need of maintenance/repair and those which were still in a satisfactory condition. They also suggested that a survey of use should be carried out and priority given to retaining the most popular moorings.

There was general agreement that tolls should be levied at a rate which would fulfil the needs of the Broads and their users rather than being set an arbitrary level and maintenance restricted by budgetary constraints.

The Society was already collaborating closely with the Hire Boat Federation and NSBA as joint representations would be essential to draw up a plan for providing sufficient moorings, both formal and informal, throughout the Broads.

It was agreed that this issue was of sufficient importance and complexity to justify an additional meeting. Possible dates proposed were 12 or 19 January 2015, subject to a room being available. The Administrator would check the position and email members.

3.3 Questionnaire on Waterside Chalets

Members felt there was no need to invite Kayleigh Wood (BA) to the next meeting to report on her research project.

3.4 Broads Authority Consultation on Branding the Broads as a National Park

The Main Committee had discussed the proposal at some length but failed to reach a unanimous consensus. The Society Chairman had therefore offered to put together a draft based on the views expressed and incorporating all the concerns raised by committee members. He had also invited Trustees to submit further thoughts by email. Comments by NRSC had been fed into the debate.

Paul Savage had received a copy of the latest draft response and agreed to send it to NRSC members so that they could study it and add their own comments before the final version was submitted.

3.5 Policy on dealing with planning applications in which a member of the Sub-Committee has an interest

It was agreed to add "Declarations of Interest" as a standing item on the agenda.

The Administrator already ensured that planning applications submitted by someone on the committee were sent to another member who would, unless the application was uncontroversial, consult with colleagues before submitting a response. She would also include in this category applications in which a member might have an interest.

4 **Committee Membership**

It was agreed that recruitment of new members should be removed from the agenda for the time being.

5 **Matters arising from the Main Committee held on 11 November.**

The main issues discussed are set out below

5.1 Branding the Broads (see Minute 3.4 above)

5.2 Hoveton Great Broads (see Planning – minute 9.1 below)

5.3 Upper Thurne Working Group

Brian Wilkins, Chair of Hickling Sailing Club, had volunteered to lead the Group a meeting would be held in Hickling on 8 January to which all previous members would be invited.

7 Norfolk Hub and NDR

Nothing to report. The Sub-Committee would maintain a watching brief on improvements to the A47 to assess any implications for the NDR and Norfolk Hub.

8 Issues relating to the Society's Mission

8.1 Landscape Partnership Project

The Broads Authority has established partnerships with a range of stakeholders to develop a multi-million pound lottery funding bid for a project to enrich, protect and help people make the most of unique heritage sites and landscapes. Keith Bacon was a member of the Project Board, representing the Society. It was suggested that there was an opportunity to make a case for the inclusion of mooring provision within the project.

More information was available on the BA website.

9 Planning

9.1 Planning Applications and decisions during the last four months

A list had been circulated.

3895 – Landfall, 8 Anchor Street, Coltishall

The Chairman had attended the site visit at which he had made it clear to the Inspecting team that the applicant was a member of one of the Broads Society's Sub-Committees.

The application had been approved.

9.2 Refusals, withdrawn applications and appeals

3908 – Substation, Ropes Hill, Horning – Outline planning for one new dwelling, demolition of sub-station and erect ion of new sub-station in the corner of the plot.

The Society had opposed the application which had now been withdrawn

9.3 New applications to consider

3914 – Hoveton Marshes, Horning Road, Hoveton

New vehicular access from Horning Road, car park, equipment store, temporary toilets, canoe slipway, landing stage, boardwalk, viewing platform and temporary re-watering lagoon on the Haugh, Hoveton Estate.

It was agreed that the response should state that the Society was aware that the application was a preliminary to the proposed bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for the restoration of Hoveton Great Broad and had considered it in this context. The application for a car park and other features relates to the provision of public access to the Broad to meet the HLF requirement for public benefit. However, it is our view that what is proposed is insufficient to warrant a large grant of public money for the restoration of a private Broad. The activity to which the permission

relates concerns a canoe trail passing from Pound End across the marshes via the network of drainage dykes. It ends some distance from Hoveton Great Broad to which very limited access is given, on foot only, via a boardwalk and ending in a small viewing platform overlooking Hoveton Great Broad. We anticipate that the HLF will regard this as insufficient “engagement” by the public with the Broad Restoration Scheme, much of which will be out of sight.

In summary, the Society’s view was that approval of the application should be conditional on implementation of the Broad Restoration Scheme so as to prevent the owner of the site from constructing a car park etc which could be used for other commercial purposes in the event that the restoration bid failed. The Society would strongly oppose a Restoration Scheme which, in its present form, provided insufficient public access and would hope that a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund would be refused on these grounds.

3916 – PH95B, North East Riverbank, Bridge Road, Potter Heigham
Object on the grounds that this section of the riverbank is less developed. The previous property was burnt down some thirty years ago and it would be preferable to retain the open space rather than rebuild on this site.

One other application was considered and it was agreed that a “no objection” response was appropriate.

9.4 Other planning matters

Listed thatched cottage on May Gurney site
The Administrator had, as requested, asked for information from Ben Hogg (BA Conservation Office) who had passed it to his colleague Rob Rogers. She was still awaiting a reply and would raise the problem with Ben Hogg.

10 A.O.B

Peter Cobb reported that the new owner of Hautbois Hall had already submitted a number of planning applications in Belaugh.

11. Dates of Meetings 2015

Mondays: 9 February, 13 April, 22 June, 10 August, 12 October 14 December.

The meeting closed at 9.40 pm

Signed

Date.....